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## ISIS Statement on *Washington Post* Report from May 28, 2009

In the wake of North Korea's underground nuclear test, the [\*Washington Post\*](#) today called Pakistan's imminent development of nuclear-tipped cruise missiles and perhaps thermonuclear weapons a sign of a "more mature" program, as if to imply that more destructive nuclear weapons somehow lead to a better nation.

The misuse of language has often occurred in debates over nuclear arsenals, particularly during the Cold War, as adversaries tried to make the horrible look bearable. Words such as "modernization" were carefully used to distort the debates over nuclear weapon systems. By incorrectly describing what is going on in Pakistan, these choices of words distort the debate before it even starts. Debates over conventional weapons are spared these distortions. Few would say, for example, that the possession of semi-automatic weapons by criminals is a sign of a more mature criminal.

In the last two weeks, Pakistan has sought to turn the public debate over its nuclear program into a binary choice between Pakistan expanding its program and Pakistan modernizing its program. The truth, however, is more complex. Pakistan is likely supplementing or replacing its current uranium-based nuclear weapon arsenal with plutonium-based weapons which will be more destructive and deliverable. "Modernizing" a nuclear weapons program, rather, should at most be interpreted as improving the security of existing nuclear weapons, increasing security of fissile material in storage, at military and civilian nuclear industrial sites, or in transit.

[Banner image credit: DigitalGlobe-ISIS]

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